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BORAX, a universally-known word, comes from the Ar. *buraq*.

CORUNDUM (Fr. *corindon*) owes its form to the Hindostan *Kurand*.

KAOLIN, the well-known porcelain-earth, was first mainly obtained from *Kau-Ling*, in China: whence its name.

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## A MONTH IN PALÁWAN.

BY J. B. STEERE.

THE island of Paláwan, or, as it is more frequently called by the Spaniards, Paráqua, is classed as one of the Philippine group. It runs from the northeast to the southwest, and is something over 250 miles long, while it hardly averages 20 miles in width. It fronts the China sea on the west, and the Sulu or Mindora sea on the east. It is distantly connected on the north and east with the other Philippines—through the Cuyos with Panay, and through the Calamines with Mindoro and Luzon; but it is much more closely connected on the south by Balabac and other small islands with Borneo. It is mountainous and heavily timbered, and but thinly inhabited, the native population being estimated by the Spaniards at ten or twelve thousand. The native people are of at least two races, Malays and Negritos. The southern end is chiefly inhabited by people of Malay race, to whom the Spaniards give the name of their hereditary African enemies, Moros or Moors. They are Mahometan in religion, and this, with the presence of their priests, has kept them more or less united, and perhaps a little in advance of the northern tribes. The northern part is inhabited by savages of Malay race, living in small, scattered tribes, and of Negritos—wooly-haired black people—living in much the same state, and apparently amalgamating with the Malays. The Spanish have had some small settlements of Christian Indians from Luzon, at the north, for some time, and for fifteen or twenty years have been forming a convict town at Puerto Princesa, on the east coast, and near the middle of the island. This now numbers some twelve or fifteen hundred inhabitants, mostly criminals shipped there from other parts of the colony. This is the capital and residence of the Spanish governor and other officers. Within a few years the Spanish have also formed small military settlements on the west coast.

Our party from the University of Michigan reached the island about the first of September, 1887, in the midst of the rainy season, but as the showers usually came in the afternoon, we were able to do a good deal of hunting and other collecting in the forenoon, while we spent the afternoon in skinning and preparing the collection of the morning. From lack of roads or other means of communication, our work was done chiefly on the low, heavily-timbered peninsula on which the town is built. We also did some work across the bay, along the little river Iguahit, and about a village of natives who called themselves Tagbaunas. The collections made by us during the four weeks of our stay numbered about seven hundred birds of some one hundred and twenty species; thirty mammals of five species; thirty amphibia of three species; one fresh-water turtle; fifteen lizards of six species; fifteen snakes of nine species; three hundred butterflies of thirty species; a few small and inconspicuous beetles, scorpions, and centipedes; ten or twelve species of corals from the shallow waters of the bay, and a large number of fine land and tree shells.

The island has been considered to belong to the Philippine group zoologically as well as politically—Mr. Wallace dividing the Indo-Malayan sub-region into three divisions: Java, Sumatra, Borneo, and Malacca, and the Philippines. Our work would seem to show that Paláwan is much more nearly allied zoologically to Borneo than are the other islands of the group, and probably more nearly allied to Borneo than to the other islands. This state of things seems to be especially shown in the mammals, in which the island is much richer than the rest of the group. It possesses, in common with Borneo and the other Philippines, the common gray monkey, *Macacus cynomolgus*, a species of *Tupaia*, one of squirrels, a wild hog, and one or two species of civet cats. In addition to these we found the manis or pangolin and the binturong, both common to Borneo, but wanting in the rest of the Philippines. We also became satisfied of the existence of a porcupine, *Hystrix*, a large round-tailed flying squirrel, *Pteromys*, and of a small species of the Mustelidæ, with powerful and unpleasant odor. Besides these Bornean forms there is probably also a species of tree-cat, *Felis*, and a mountain goat in the island. These species rest on the evidence of Spaniards and half-breeds capable of observing, and worthy of credence. In addition to these the savages declare that there is an orang outang in the interior. The mammals common to the rest of the Philip-

pine group and wanting in Paláwan are also noteworthy. Deer, present everywhere else, are said not to exist, and we saw no signs of them. The kaguan or Galeopithecus, one of the most common Philippine mammals, is apparently absent here. These facts seem to show that Paláwan has received its animal population from Borneo at a different time and through a different route than the rest of the group. The intervening island of Balabac possesses the common monkey, the wild hog, a true squirrel, a porcupine, an ill-smelling weasel; lacks the manis of Paláwan, but has a diminutive deer, *Tragulus*, common to it and Borneo.

In its birds Paláwan also shows its closer connection with Borneo. Among Bornean forms which do not seem to have made their way into the other Philippines, are the two beautiful genera of greenlets, *Iora* and *Phyllornis*; a three-toed woodpecker, *Tiga*; a true pheasant, *Polyplectron*, closely allied to the beautiful glass pheasants of Borneo and Malacca; and a frog-mouth (*Podargus*) bird, allied to the goat-suckers, but with the mouth parts (beak) heavy and hard. The Bornean look of our birds is quite apparent when we compare them with birds from the other islands, and careful study will probably show many more instances than those above mentioned.

Sun-birds, kingfishers, cuckoos, and swifts were especially abundant in species and individuals.

About September 20 we began to find large numbers of titlarks, snipes, plovers, and sand-pipers, and concluded that this must be the advance of the fall migration from the northwest. The only arboreal species which seemed to arrive at the same time was one of the warblers, *Sylviidæ*.

We undertook to make as careful notes of habits, height of flight, and feeding, character of foods, etc., as was possible in our hurried stay. Tropical species of birds seem to be much more nearly limited to specific kinds of food than those of temperate countries. A careful examination of the stomachs of our collection showed that some species lived entirely upon ants, others upon centipedes, others upon some special kind of fruit, etc., etc. The three-toed woodpecker noted above lives exclusively on ants, and these possibly of a single species—at least all of the same color; while a four-toed species (*Chrysocolaptes*), much like the three-toed one in size and color, lives on the common larval food of the family. One splendid long-tailed cuckoo, with beautiful metallic-blue coloring, bare spots of vivid crimson about the eyes, and immense light-green beak,

were exactly alike in the sexes with the exception that the male had eyes of cherry red, while those of the female were yellow—and this uniformly so through six or eight pairs procured. We shall take means for a more thorough study of the mammals of the island than was possible during our short stay. We have come on to the port of Zamboanga, in the island of Mindanao, and purpose to make a collection of the same character here.

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## INTELLIGENT SELECTION.

BY CHARLES MORRIS.

WHY do not distinct species of animals and plants appear as a consequence of man's selection and preservation of varieties? This is a question which has been asked more often than it has been answered, and which yet remains to some extent an open query. Among domesticated animals—dogs, pigeons, and a few other species in particular—the varieties produced by selection have been very numerous and well marked, yet they still remain dogs, pigeons, etc., and there is no generally accepted evidence that a new species has ever been produced by this method.<sup>1</sup>

Yet though much has been said on this question, it is by no means exhausted. There is one important circumstance which does not appear to have been considered, and which therefore gives warrant for a further review of the subject. It is not sufficiently borne in mind that the production of, and experiments on, varieties of animals and plants has been left almost entirely in the hands of ordinary industry. Science has come in to examine the results, yet has had little to do with the experiments. These have been governed almost solely by pecuniary considerations; yet it must be admitted that what may be admirably calculated to make money may be valueless to science, and that had a long series of experiments been conducted for scientific purposes alone, the results must have

<sup>1</sup> It is necessary to state, however, that many scientists hold that new species, and even genera, have been produced in domesticated animals. The carrier pigeon, for instance, is looked upon as a well-marked and persistent species, while variations in the dentition of dogs, of generic value, have been observed. Changes of this character are of the kind which it is important for scientific observers to endeavor to hereditarily transmit, and render permanent.